

Joyce

McDonald

2006 Legislature – Session Priorities



State Representative Joyce McDonald

122-C Legislative Bldg.
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600
(360) 786-7948

Toll-free hotline:

1-800-562-6000

E-mail:

mcdonald.joyce@leg.wa.gov

Web site:

<http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/members/mcdonald.htm>

Committees:

Juvenile Justice and Family Law
Ranking Republican
Appropriations
Rules

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 25th DISTRICT

Dear friends,

The 2006 legislative session, which began Jan. 9, is a short one – only 60 days – but an important one for our district and the state.

As we approach the midway point of this session, I wanted to briefly outline in this newsletter some of the key priorities I am addressing on your behalf at the state Capitol.

At the top of that list is ensuring fiscal responsibility and accountability with the state operating budget. The state has a \$1.4 billion budget surplus and there is plenty of pressure to spend that money. We need to resist that pressure and set aside money for future emergencies and economic downturns.

I am also continuing work to protect children from sex predators, increase penalties against the criminal mistreatment and abandonment of our most vulnerable citizens, expand access to private health insurance, and find ways to help Washington create and attract new jobs in the private sector.

As always, I'm interested to hear from you. Please feel free to contact me with your questions, comments and ideas.

Thank you for the honor of allowing me to serve you!

Joyce

Rep. Joyce McDonald



Join me for a town hall meeting!

Your views are important to me. Let's get together and talk about them! Mark your calendar and join me for an informal town hall meeting **Feb. 18** in Puyallup.

Bring your comments, questions and ideas.

WHEN: Saturday, Feb. 18

11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

WHERE: Puyallup Public Library

324 South Meridian
Puyallup, WA

Serving Edgewood, Fife, Midland, Milton, Puyallup, Summit and South Hill



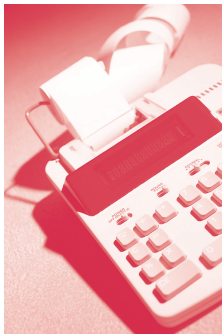
Joyce McDonald

25th DISTRICT

BUDGET and TAXES

Priority: Put government on a budget by restoring voter-approved tax and spending limits.

Last year, the majority party eliminated the voter-approved I-601 law which had limited state spending of taxpayers' money and required a two-thirds majority of the Legislature to raise taxes. This year, we have a \$1.4 billion surplus and there's nothing in place to protect taxpayers from government's insatiable appetite to spend your money.



Serving on the House Appropriations Committee, I have introduced legislation that would restore those tax and spending limits. A spending limit law is the only proven way to prevent the Legislature from going on a spending spree. It ensures fiscal discipline in crafting the state budget.

We've already seen an example this year of what happens when these taxpayer protections are not in place. Much of the surplus is attributed to a strong housing market in Washington. However, that market is beginning to flatten. That means this windfall is likely a one-time thing. Yet the supplemental budget proposes to spend more than \$503 million of the surplus on new, ongoing programs. It would also add nearly 500 new state employees and boost spending by 16.3 percent – the largest spending increase in more than a decade.

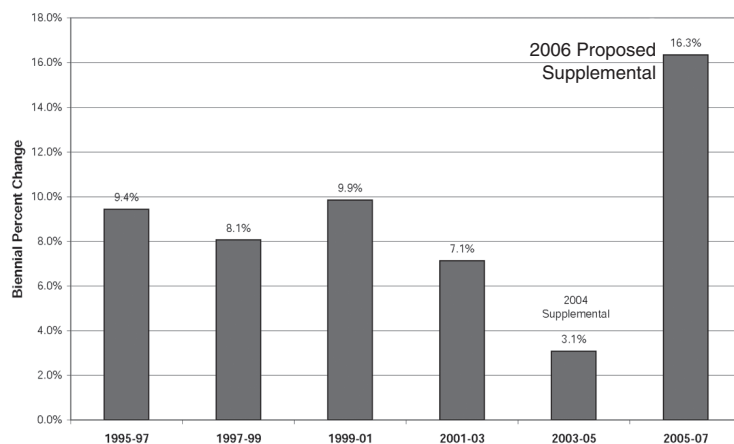
The supplemental budget proposal also fails to fund our state's pension obligations, delaying it into the future when it will cost taxpayers a lot more.

I am also concerned that only \$133 million would be placed in emergency reserves – a paltry amount for a \$27 billion budget.

Instead of spending the surplus and expanding the size of government, we should close the big hole in the pension system, save money in a protected rainy-day fund, and repeal the death tax and other tax increases heaped upon our citizens.

Finally, to protect taxpayers from government going on another tax-and-spend roller coaster ride with your money, let's bring back strong tax and spending limits.

General Fund – State Expenditures



HRC Policy

2005-07 total includes \$175.1 million in Higher Education and Public Schools expenditures from Education Legacy Trust Act.

12/20/2005

JOBS and ECONOMY

Priority: Get government out of the way of job growth by decreasing the regulatory burdens on small business, repealing the death tax, and reforming unemployment insurance.

State regulation has expanded to fill 32 phonebook-sized volumes, forming a stack of paper more than five feet tall. That's tough for local small businesses struggling to get by. Add to that the high costs of workers' compensation, problems with unemployment insurance, and the highest minimum wage rate in the nation, and it's no wonder small businesses cannot survive.

I am doing all that I can this year in the Legislature to support policies that reduce onerous regulations and make sure state government will be working with, not against businesses. When businesses succeed, more jobs are created, providing a better economy and quality of life in Washington. That's my goal.



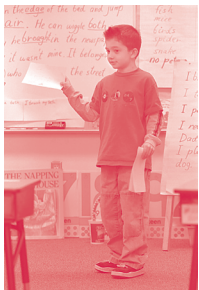
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EDUCATION

Priority: Help every student achieve WASL standards and graduate on time by offering remedial classes, tutors, and expanded summer school programs.

The class of 2008 represents a significant crossroads in our public education system. Students will be required to pass the WASL in order to graduate. Instead of lowering the standards, we need to provide the resources necessary in our public schools so that our students are prepared for the ever-changing world economy that awaits them.

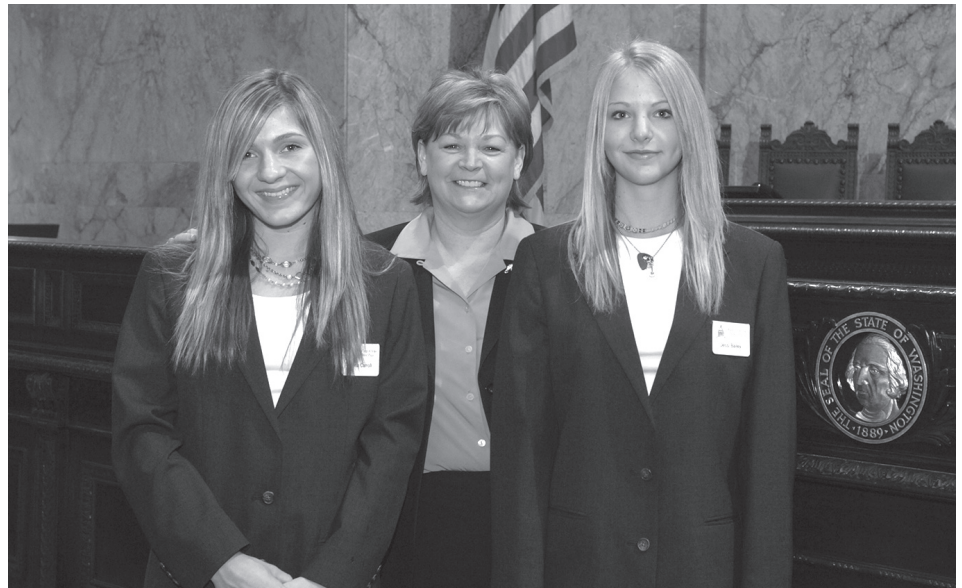


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FAMILIES

Priority: Allow citizens and their elected representatives – not the courts – to decide the definition of marriage.

The state's Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) went through a careful and exhaustive legislative process. It was – and continues to be – supported by a large majority of Democrats and Republicans. DOMA is now under challenge in the state Supreme Court. It's my hope that the court recognizes and upholds the people's right to determine this issue.



Hanna Carroll and Jessi Bailey, both of Puyallup, served as my legislative pages during the second week of the 2006 session. Pages are students at least 14 years of age who have not reached their 17th birthday. They spend a week at the state Capitol helping legislators with documents and assisting in ceremonial duties. They also have classroom time learning about the legislative process. For more information on the legislative page program, call my office at 360-786-7948 or go online to: <http://www1.leg.wa.gov/House/PageInternProgram>.

HEALTH CARE

Priority: Give health care back to patients by offering affordable, tailored choices that work best for them and their families.

Health insurance mandates drive up the cost of health care by as much as 50 percent. Washington has 48 mandates – things like massage therapy and acupuncture. The extreme number of these mandates has made it so that many small businesses cannot afford to provide coverage for their employees, even though they would like to.

To make health insurance more affordable, we need to address problem areas and regulations that drive up the cost. I support solutions such as decreasing government mandates, giving employers greater flexibility to offer affordable basic health coverage for working families, promoting consumer-driven private health insurance and Health Savings Accounts, and enacting liability reforms to control the escalating cost of medical malpractice insurance.



PUBLIC SAFETY

Priority: Strengthen laws against criminals, lock up child rapists, and protect our most vulnerable from intentional neglect.



There is no more fundamental duty of government than to ensure the protection of its citizens. Unfortunately, our laws are still not strong enough in many cases to protect our families, children and the most vulnerable.

Washington's laws continue to allow for sex predators to return to our neighborhoods only months after preying on children. We need to have stronger sentences against child rapists.

Last year, I introduced House Bill 2003 that would prohibit sex offenders from having access to pornography and restrict them from coming within 200 yards of a victim or a victim's residence. I am continuing to push for passage of that measure.

This year, I have co-sponsored "Jessica's Law Plus," a measure named after a Florida girl who was kidnapped and murdered by a sex offender. The legislation, House Bill 2476, would impose mandatory sentences for convicted sex predators and require lifetime electronic monitoring for those released into the community.

I am also supporting legislation this year that strengthens our laws against auto theft, identity theft and methamphetamine production.

In addition, I am continuing to fight for the protection of our most vulnerable citizens through House Bill 1080, which I prime sponsored. Under that measure, penalties are increased for the criminal mistreatment and/or abandonment of a dependent person.

Visit your state Capitol!

We are so fortunate to have one of the most beautiful state Capitol campuses in the nation. From the numerous veterans memorials to the rose garden, the fourth tallest masonry dome in the world to the elegant state reception room inside, the state Capitol campus is an enjoyable and impressive place to visit.

In most instances, the Capitol campus is less than an hour's drive from nearly anywhere in the 25th District. I can promise you it is worth the drive.

Public tours for visitors are available every hour on the hour from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., seven days a week. Tours begin in the north foyer of the Legislative Building (Capitol), at the Tour Information Desk. Groups are also welcome with advance notice to the tour office at (360) 902-8880.

In addition, morning and afternoon tours of the governor's mansion are available on Wednesdays with advance reservations to the tour office number above.

This is your state Capitol. I invite you to come for a visit.

If you'd like more information and/or you are planning to come to the Capitol, call my office at (360) 786-7948. We will be glad to assist.

- Inside:**
- Budget and Taxes
 - Jobs and Economy
 - Education
 - Families
 - Health Care
 - Public Safety

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